BRITISH COLUMBIA

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highlights

a weekly digest of recently released British Columbia statistics

Immigration

- **During the first three months of 1998, British Columbia received 8,971 immigrants, down 29% from the 12,562 persons recorded during the same period in 1997.** Canadian landings were also down to 42,796 persons, a decline of 16% from the first quarter in 1997.

  The decline in immigration to BC and Canada during the first quarter was largely the result of lower immigration from Hong Kong, and to a lesser extent, from Taiwan. The transfer of the former British colony of Hong Kong to China in June of 1997 likely played a significant role in the lower inflow of Hong Kong immigrants to BC during the first quarter. *Source: BC STATS*

Investment

- **Revised capital expenditures are expected to reach $20.9 billion in 1998, an increase of 2.1% from the previous year.** Investment in construction projects fueled the capital spending intentions. Construction spending is expected to increase by 3.5% while investment in machinery and equipment is predicted to decline slightly by 0.6%. Public sector investment is projected to increase 18.5% in 1998, and is the main reason for the overall total increase of 2.1%. Private sector investment is expected to decrease slightly (-1.2%). By industry, capital expenditure decreases are predicted in manufacturing, specifically, paper (-41.1%) and wood (-27.3%), while increases to communications and utilities are expected to be up 6.5%.

  Nationally, public and private investment intentions for 1998 are higher in most other provinces. Canadian spending on construction and machinery and equipment are expected to increase 7.7%, led by significant increases in Nova Scotia (22.9%) and Quebec (12.8%). PEI (-14.7%) and the Yukon (-27.0%) are the only areas where investment intentions in 1998 are lower than 1997. *Source: Statistics Canada*

High Technology

- **British Columbia's high technology sector rose 6% in 1996, outpacing growth in the overall economy.** This increase, as measured by the gross domestic product (a measure of value added), marked the second consecutive year that high technology sector growth out performed the total BC economy. The largest single industry in the high technology sector—Engineering, Scientific and Technical Services, which includes activities such as surveying, urban planning, drafting and laboratory testing, generated $951 million in GDP, a modest 2% increase in 1996, compared to 20% in 1995. The Computer and Related Services industry, which includes providing computer facilities, programming and systems work, and computer maintenance and repair, contributed $590 million to the GDP, with a growth of 5% in 1996. *Source: BC STATS*

- **The Greater Vancouver Regional District was home to 3,554 of the province's 5,728 high technology establishments in 1996.** The Capital Regional District, with 554 establishments had the second greatest concentration followed by Central Okanagan with 208. *Source: BC STATS*

Report **Fewer than one in three Aboriginals live on-reserve**

Did you know...?
The median age of persons accused of committing property crimes was 21 years, compared to 29 years for those charged with violent offences.

The Economy

- **Retail trade in British Columbia declined 0.7% in May**. All sectors but furniture and drugs registered declines. Seasonally adjusted, retail sales were $2.7 billion, a 1.5% decline from the previous May. Nationally, retail sales increased 0.5% in May to $20.9 billion. Advances in other clothing stores (15%) and furniture and appliance stores (3.7%) made the greatest gains.

  Source: Statistics Canada

- **British Columbian wholesalers increased sales by 0.3% in May from the previous month**. Wholesale sales (seasonally adjusted) were down in six of the ten provinces with Quebec (-5.0%) registering the greatest decline. Nationally the sales value was down 1.2%. *Source: Statistics Canada*

Crime

- **The crime rate for British Columbia declined 7.8% in 1997**. The property crime rate (per 100,000 population) in BC showed the greatest decline at -10.5% followed by the violent crime rate (-1.1%). Canada's police-reported crime rate was the lowest since 1980. After a peak in the early 1990's, the rate has been falling steadily. In six years, Canada's crime rate has decreased 19%.

  With the exception of the territories, British Columbia's homicide rate (2.9 per 100,000 population) is the largest in Canada (1.9). Of the 581 murders committed in Canada, 114 occurred in BC Consistent with the trend since 1979, homicides committed with a firearm account for 33%, followed by stabbing (29%) and beatings (20%), strangulation/suffocation (9%), burns (5%) and poisoning (1%).

  In 1997, of 32,659 motor vehicles stolen in British Columbia, 21,922 (67%) occurred in Vancouver. The motor vehicle theft rate declined 14.2% in BC and 19.2% in Vancouver. Theft of vehicles and their components cost the Canadian insurance industry approximately $600 million in 1996 up from $500 million in 1995. *Source: Statistics Canada*

Tourism

- **Occupancy rates in British Columbia were 65.3%, a decline of 5.8 percentage points from the previous May**. Hotel occupancy rates increased in Whistler 0.2 percentage points to 37.0%, Courtenay 1.3 to 53.0%, and Penticton 1.5 to 65.1%. Vancouver registered the greatest decline of 8.8 percentage points to 73.8% while Victoria hotels had a modest decrease at 0.1 to 76.9%. *Source: Pannell,Kerr & Forster*

Income support

- **Ten percent of the population (aged 19-64) in British Columbia received either BC Benefits or Employment Insurance in March 1998**. This rate has declined 3.2 percentage points from 13.6% in March 1996. The youth category, aged 19-24, declined 6.0 percentage points to 12.7%, while those aged 25-54 dropped 2.2 percentage points to 10.7%. The rate for 55-64 year olds decreased 0.8 percent points to 6.4%. *Source: BC STATS*

Family Expenditures

- **In 1996, average household expenditures totaled $51,440 in British Columbia**. Proportionally, the major household expenditures were food (12.2%), shelter (18.2%), transportation (12.4%), and recreation (5.7%). On average, a BC household in 1996 spent 20.5% on personal taxes, relative to 21.9% for Canada. *Source: Statistics Canada*

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For data originating from Statistics Canada: data sourced to 'Statistics Canada' has been retrieved from CANSIM, the agency's electronic database; otherwise the source is identified as 'SC' plus the publication name or catalogue number.

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BC STATS

1996 Census Fast Facts

Contact: Anne Kittredge
Tel: (250) 387-0374
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Issue: 13

Focus on BC Aboriginals: Living On-Reserve/Off-Reserve

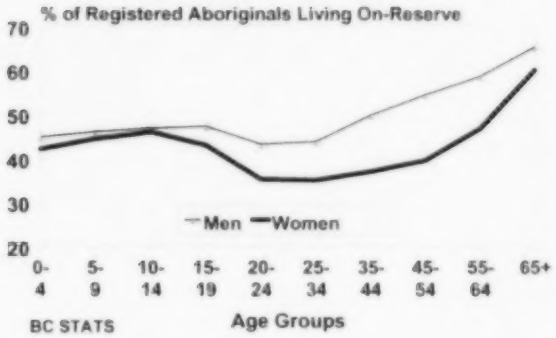
Fewer than One in Three Aboriginals Live On-Reserve

The legal and institutional structure of the Aboriginal community in Canada is many-layered. Often, the terminology to describe these layers is very confusing. Legally, Aboriginal peoples are either registered, or not registered under the Indian Act. To be a Registered Indian, the requirements are that the person has to have at least one Registered Indian parent, as well as choose to be on record with Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. A further grouping, primarily decided by the Aboriginal community itself, is Band/First Nation Membership. An Aboriginal person can be registered and excluded from band membership, or, alternatively, can be a member of a band and not registered. These latter two groups are small in numbers, representing only 2 and 3 per cent respectively.

There is a futher confusion in the terminology applied to Aboriginal peoples. Statistics Canada provides us with two different definitions of Aboriginal peoples—the first includes those who stated any Aboriginal heritage, and the second includes only those who "identify", or consider themselves as Aboriginal. *(This terminology is described in the BC Stats 1996 Census Fast Facts No. 10 release.)* The purpose of this particular release is to document who, among the persons that **identify** as Aboriginal, live on-reserve in British Columbia.

The largest proportion of Aboriginals in BC are both Registered Indians and Band Members (65 per cent of total). This group would have the closest ties (at least legally) with the aboriginal community, and yet less than half (45 per cent) actually live on-reserve. Among the other 35 per cent who are either not registered and/or not band members, a very small proportion live on-reserve (2.7 per cent). Consequently, the "on-reserve rate" is only 30 per cent for all Aborignals.

The Choice to Live On-Reserve Differs by Gender and Age Group



Registered women are less likely to live on-reserve than men, particularly in the child-bearing/rearing years. This difference in the gender profile could best be explained by the inter-marriage of registered Indians with the non-registered population. Because the males' living style is usually adopted by a new couple, women who live on-reserve and marry a man off-reserve, they would tend to move off-reserve, whereas on-reserve men would likely stay where they are and their partners would join them.

The difference in the on-reserve rate by age group has many stories to tell. The numbers do not just reflect a generational phenomenon; i.e., the older generation are more likely to live on reserve than their children's generation, but also reflect the lifetime pattern of living arrangements of registered Indians.

Although the current defininiton of aboriginals is not identical to previous censuses, the current on/off reserve age pattern is very similar to historical age patterns from previous censuses. It is also similar to historical administrative data from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

Some points the age data show are:

- Young adults (age 20–34) are most likely to live off-reserve.
- As both men and women reach their 50s, they are inclined to move back to their reserves.
- Young girls start to move off-reserve in their teens, and boys wait until their twenties.
- A higher proportion of young children live on reserve than do women in their child-bearing/rearing years. This would indicate that family size is larger on-reserve than off-reserve amongst registered Indians.

Are Aboriginal peoples more or less likely to live on reserve today than in previous times? With aboriginal land claims and self-government initiatives in progress, it would be very useful to be able to make these comparisons. Unfortunately, this is not possible, as earlier censuses did not use the aboriginal "identity" definition. Furthermore, the population count of residents on reserve land is no longer a gauge of Aboriginal living patterns—now, many non-aboriginal persons live in homes located on leased reserve land. Therefore, for any time trend analysis, researchers will have to rely on the administrative data from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

Aboriginals in British Columbia
Registered and Band Membership Status by Living On/Off-Reserve

	All Aboriginals	Band Members	Non-Band Members
All Aboriginals			
Total	139,655	94,870	44,785
- Living On-Reserve	42,455	41,515	935
- Living Off-Reserve	97,200	53,355	43,850
% Living On Reserve	**30.4**	**43.8**	**2.1**
Registered Indians			
Total	93,835	90,880	2,955
- Living On-Reserve	41,320	41,105	210
- Living Off-Reserve	52,515	49,775	2,740
% Living On Reserve	**44.0**	**45.2**	**7.1**
Not Registered Indians			
Total	45,820	3,990	41,830
- Living On-Reserve	1,135	410	720
- Living Off-Reserve	44,685	3,575	41,110
% Living On Reserve	**2.5**	**10.3**	**1.7**

Source: Statistics Canada, Census 1996
Produced By: BC STATS

British Columbia Registered Indians
Age and Sex By Living On/Off-Reserve

	Total	Living On-Reserve	Living Off Reserve	% Living On-Reserve
Both Sexes				
Age 0-4	9,765	4,225	5,540	**43.3**
Age 5-9	10,545	4,755	5,790	**45.1**
Age 10-14	9,470	4,380	5,090	**46.3**
Age 15-19	8,620	3,875	4,745	**45.0**
Age 20-24	8,075	3,140	4,935	**38.9**
Age 25-34	16,875	6,560	10,315	**38.9**
Age 35-44	14,325	6,105	8,220	**42.6**
Age 45-54	8,190	3,785	4,405	**46.2**
Age 55-64	4,570	2,370	2,200	**51.9**
Age 65+	3,400	2,120	1,280	**62.4**
All Ages	93,835	41,320	52,515	**44.0**
Males				
Age 0-4	4,965	2,215	2,755	**44.6**
Age 5-9	5,425	2,485	2,940	**45.8**
Age 10-14	4,910	2,290	2,615	**46.6**
Age 15-19	4,525	2,125	2,395	**47.0**
Age 20-24	3,985	1,715	2,270	**43.0**
Age 25-34	7,780	3,395	4,385	**43.6**
Age 35-44	6,525	3,235	3,285	**49.6**
Age 45-54	3,780	2,050	1,725	**54.2**
Age 55-64	2,055	1,200	855	**58.4**
Age 65+	1,505	985	525	**65.4**
All Ages	45,455	21,700	23,755	**47.7**
Females				
Age 0-4	4,800	2,010	2,780	**41.9**
Age 5-9	5,120	2,265	2,850	**44.2**
Age 10-14	4,560	2,090	2,475	**45.8**
Age 15-19	4,090	1,745	2,345	**42.7**
Age 20-24	4,090	1,430	2,665	**35.0**
Age 25-34	9,095	3,165	5,930	**34.8**
Age 35-44	7,800	2,870	4,930	**36.8**
Age 45-54	4,415	1,735	2,675	**39.3**
Age 55-64	2,515	1,170	1,350	**46.5**
Age 65+	1,895	1,135	755	**59.9**
All Ages	48,380	19,620	28,760	**40.6**

Source: Statistics Canada, Census 1996
Produced By: BC STATS

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also on the Internet at http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca

BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Apr 1/98	% change on one year ago
BC	3,958.7	1.4
Canada	30,488.9	1.0
GDP and INCOME		% change on
(BC - at market prices)	1997	one year ago
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)*	109,347	3.3
GDP *($ 1992 millions)*	98,201	2.2
GDP *($ 1992 per Capita)*	25,039	0.2
Personal Disposable Income *($ 1992 per Capita)*	16,515	-2.3
TRADE ($ millions)		
Manufacturing Shipments (seas. adj.) May	2,621	-10.4
Merchandise Exports (raw) Apr	1,909	-19.5
Retail Sales (seasonally adjusted) May	2,789	-1.5
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX		% change on
(all items - 1992=100)	Jun '98	one year ago
BC	110.4	0.4
Canada	108.8	1.0
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		% change on
(seasonally adjusted)	Jun '98	one year ago
Labour Force - BC	2,041	1.9
Employed - BC	1,849	1.0
Unemployed - BC	192	11.7
		Jun '97
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	9.4	8.6
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	8.4	9.1
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Jul 22/98	July 23/97
Prime Business Rate	6.50	4.75
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	6.55	5.20
- 5 year	6.95	7.00
US/CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Jul 22/98	July 23/97
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $	1.4954	1.3811
US $ *(reciprocal of above rate)*	0.6687	0.7241
AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS		% change on
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	Apr '98	one year ago
BC	612.18	-0.2
Canada	608.94	2.0

SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Earnings } Statistics Canada

Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

The High Technology sector is one of the fastest growing parts of the provincial economy. This growth has created considerable interest, as planners look for sustainable long run options for creating employment and wealth. However, good planning requires sound information that is consistently available. BC STATS and the Information, Science, and Technology Agency (ISTA) are tracking high technology gross domestic product (GDP), revenue, employment, wages and salaries, exports and imports, and the number of firms in each region on a long term basis. The information is set out in an annual release containing both detailed tables and analysis of significant relationships and trends. The latest of these releases, covering the years 1988-1996 is now on the BC STATS web site.

You can download a free copy at:

http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/bus_stat/hi_tech.htm

[continued]

While 1996 is the latest available year for the important GDP figures, much of the other information is available for later years. Watch this space for news of updated tables that we will be adding to the site in coming months.

Released this week by BC STATS

- 1998 Consumer Price Index, June 1998
- Immigration Highlights, First Quarter, 1998
- Earnings & Employment Trends, April 1998

Next week

- Quarterly Regional Statistics, Qtrs 1 & 2, 1998
- Business Indicators, July 1998
- Current Statistics, July 1998

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